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MY MADMEN.

We have most of us known some folks not quite liable to be deprived of their liberty, and whom we nevertheless have no hesitation in considering as far from being in their right wits. The people I have in view are commonly of a cheerful disposition—volatile even to flightiness; and although not wealthy (a circumstance which is liable to provoke litigation as to who shall have the custody of one's person) are always in easy circumstances; they are, I fancy, rather spoiled by the affectionate attention of their saner relatives, who consult their every whim, with an eye to their will. But, after all, I may be speaking uncharitably of both parties. If Miss Velvet is really fond of cats, why should not Mr Kene Velvet, her nephew, exert himself to procure a Tortoiseshell Tom, as a present likely to please his beloved relative? Let us take the world as we find it, and not pry into other folk's motives too narrowly; for we may perhaps have purchased—well, a kitten—to gratify some Miss Velvet ourselves. While as to people being mad, if the lady is really fond of cats, why should she not keep her twenty couple or so about her, as many a country gentleman does of dogs?

There are far less eccentric persons in the world than myself, and yet I remember being looked upon with some suspicion by a whole carriageful of fellow-travellers, because, when requested to give up my railway-ticket, I declined, upon the ground of its having got into too inside a pocket, or, in other words, because I had swallowed it. The fact was that I merely had at that time a habit of nibbling at things—in horses, called crib-biting—and would devour letters, cards, pencils (even bone ones), and, in short, anything that my teeth could make their way through; but this strangers thought to be extremely odd. Similarly, I have, on my part, set down others as queer, who, in reality, were as commonplace as myself. Thus, when travelling by rail in the Black Country some years ago, upon professional business, and with a large blue bag, full of law-papers, I was a good deal startled by the importunity of a fellow-

traveller, belonging to that district, who kept beseeching me to 'let him look at the bird.' I certainly thought he was mad, and endeavoured to pacify him by asserting that the bird was ill, and could not bear the light; that if the bag was opened, he would be sure to fly out of window; that he was laying an egg, and must not be disturbed; and many other ingenious fibs. Whereas it subsequently appeared that it is the custom with gentlemen of that locality to carry about with them fighting-cocks in bags, and that my companion was only asking an ordinary favour, which it was most discourteous not to grant.

Again, only a very few months back, I was starting from King's Cross for Hitchin, when into the first-class carriage where I was sitting entered a person of Herculean proportions, with an enormous empty sack, and an open knife in his hand; he apologised for this latter circumstance upon the ground that the blade did not shut up, and therefore could not be put in his pocket without inconvenience; but I confess I felt sorry that we were alone. What would be easier than for a man of his great physical superiority to first find a sheath for his deadly weapon in myself, and then to place my carcass in that sack, for which it seemed so eminently fitted—the very *vade-mecum* of a resurrectionist, and which no respectable body-snatcher should be without.

'How many minutes are there before the train starts?' inquired this gentleman with earnestness.

'It is nearly a quarter of an hour,' replied I, with great civility.

'Then there is yet time,' answered the stranger, and instantly sprang out of the carriage, and disappeared with his peculiar luggage.

I knew that if the police did their duty, I should never see him again, and, moreover, plenty of fellow-passengers of both sexes soon joined me, so that I no longer entertained any apprehensions, even in case he should return. Just as the whistle sounded, he did return, bearing with him both knife and sack as before; only this time the latter was full. His countenance gleamed with a hideous satisfaction, as he hurried in and took the only vacant seat,

and refusing the guard's offer to take charge of his luggage, hugged it between his knees. It struck me at once that he had rushed out into the Gray's Inn Road, committed a murder, and was now about to take his victim into the country. His eyes seemed to fulfil every condition laid down by Professor Taylor for the indication of homicidal insanity. I saw a young lady who sat opposite to him glance at her mother in unmistakable alarm, and he saw it too, and winked, as I believe, with a view to reassure her. No sooner did the train begin to move, than he addressed her with great good-humour : ' You were thinking, miss, what a pity it was that there was no bread and butter.'

'Indeed, sir, I was not,' commenced the young lady politely.

'O yes, you were, miss ; don't tell *me*,' interrupted the stranger, wagging his head with bird-like sagacity. 'But, bless you, what I've got here is good by itself, with nothing added.' He opened the twisted canvas of the sack. 'Here's—I thought he was going to say "cold meat," but what he did say was : "Here" Oysters ; and the best in England. There's a shop close to this station as I never pass by without looking in and buying a lot to eat on my way down. Here's plenty here for all of us, and I'll open 'em.' And he did open them, and exceedingly well too, and we all partook of his bivalves, not excepting the young lady and her mother. The gentleman with the sack was as sane as any one of us, and the only madness would have lain in the individual who should have refused his hospitality.

Upon the other hand, I travelled by the same train from Brighton to London, for six months, with Mr Montgomery Tibbets, without having a suspicion that he was a lunatic ; his conversation, indeed, was 'horsey' to a very remarkable degree, and it was a constant source of complaint with him that *Bell's Life in London* was not a daily paper instead of a weekly ; but if such characteristics constitute madness, five-sixths of the subalterns in Her Majesty's army should be placed in confinement immediately, and only be let out in time of war. Well, then, Mr Tibbets and I were very good friends whenever we found ourselves in the same carriage, so far as conversation upon the weather went, or monologue (upon his part) concerning the coming Cesarewitch, or just concluded Leger, though if one had chanced to see the other's decease in the *Times* some fine morning, it would probably not have destroyed his appetite for breakfast. The next summer, I took a house on another part of the sea-coast, and lost sight of this occasional companion, so that when we happened to meet in the following November, at Tattersall's, where I had gone to buy a second-hand dog-cart, our greeting after such long absence was unusually cordial.

'Now come and dine with me to-morrow, do,' said Tibbets : 'I live at Primrose Hill ;' and he gave his address-card, with the dinner-hour in pencil in the corner of it. 'The fact is, I am in the highest spirits, and would like to have as many friends

about me as possible. I have just had a horse knocked down to me here for seventy guineas that is worth at least three times the money. Just come and look at him.' He opened the door of a neighbouring stable, and introduced me to a huge ungainly dun, for which I would have bidden perhaps fifteen pounds, and presented it to some enemy for his private riding, if I had wished to do him a very bad turn indeed.

'There's blood ! there's bone !' [there was certainly plenty of that] 'there's speed !' exclaimed Tibbets admiringly. 'And, what do you think—this noble animal is nothing to another which I've got in my stable at home. I bought him out of a Hansom cab the other day for six pounds four shillings. A hundred and twenty-four *shillings*, sir, for a creature who would have been cheap at that sum in *pounds*. I would stake my existence that he is a lineal descendant of the Godolphin Arabian. I keep three rugs on him, and give him six feeds of corn *per diem* ; he will turn out one of the most wonderful animals now alive. I would enter him for the *Oaks* to-morrow, with the utmost confidence, and nothing but his sex prevents my doing so.'

I was not seriously alarmed by these enthusiastic remarks of Mr Tibbets, because, in the first place, I thought I detected in him some symptoms of intoxication ; and, secondly, because I know even sensible men will talk more nonsense about horses than any other subject in the world—except, perhaps, wines ; but I parted company as soon as I could ; and took my way to Cremona Villa the next day, without much expectation of an agreeable evening. The house was a handsome one, and well furnished ; but I had scarcely been a minute in the drawing-room, when my host invited me up stairs, to what he called his Twangery. This was an apartment entirely devoted to fiddles. They hung upon the walls like barometers ; they were laid upon the shelves of what would have been elsewhere book-cases ; they were arranged upon the table like volumes of engravings or photograph-books, for the visitor to take up and amuse himself with.

'You know now why this is called Cremona Villa,' quoth Mr Tibbets. 'Violins, next to horses, are my ruling passion. The priceless instrument in yonder case is a genuine Stradivarius.'

'You don't say so !' exclaimed I, not knowing what else to say, or having the least idea what a Stradivarius was.

'Yes,' continued Mr Tibbets, 'this is the fiddle of fiddlers ; and you shall hear me play upon it immediately. I have often longed for this moment to arrive, when I have met you in the Brighton Railway. I knew you would enjoy it so much.'

'But,' replied I, 'I have heard a double knock more than once. Your other guests must be arriving.'

'They be —.' A string snapped with such a loud report, that I did not catch Mr Tibbets's exclamation. 'They can wait,' he added. 'I told cook to put back the dinner an hour, on purpose.'

I am afraid I have not much of a soul for music, although I have no objection to it a good way off, where it does not interrupt conversation. As to sitting in a room full of fiddles, with nothing to do but to listen to a fellow scraping horse-hair against cat-gut—I never thought to have been subjected to such humiliation. However, thus was I entertained by Mr Tibbets for a full hour; after which he conducted me down stairs, where a considerable number of guests (male) had long been awaiting him. I am perfectly convinced, by the exemplary good-temper which they all exhibited, by their subservience in tone and manner towards the host, and by their hostility towards me, that each member of this company expected, either in his own proper person, or in that of his children, to inherit Mr Tibbets's money. It was the most hideous illustration of Toadism I have ever witnessed. I have been in Africa, and seen persons worshipping Fetish, and the ceremony of dinner in Cremona Villa was very like it; and indeed, these benighted folks imagined, doubtless, that each was upon the Gold Coast, although not in a geographical sense.

Immediately after dinner, Mr Tibbets made a speech. He said he was pleased to see his friends at all times, and would be happy to receive the present company at dinner every day of his life.

At this everybody but myself cried 'Hear, hear; but for my part I could not help saying 'Heavens!'

All that he demanded, all that he besought in return was, that each of his guests should give him sixpence. There was a band about to play in front of Primrose Hill, for which he always made this collection. They were a worthy company of performers, but especially the first-violin.

A storm of plaudits followed this observation—not so much, I fancy, in admiration of the sentiments of the speaker, as to prevent his enlarging upon the topic of Cremonas, which every one present had had ample cause to dread. In the morning, and up to four o'clock, as I subsequently ascertained, Mr Tibbets was mad upon horses; but after that period, and until the next day, upon fiddles. All rose tumultuously, and went into the hall for their hats and umbrellas—for it was raining heavily—in order to attend this open-air concert. 'After which,' whispered the host in my private ear, 'we return to coffee and the divine Stradarius.' However, although I was weak perhaps to have gone to Mr Tibbets's at all, I was not so weak as to return thither; but stole away, under cover of night and the first-violin's first notes, to the smoking-room of my club, where I narrated this strange experience amid tumultuous applause.

An adventure I had with another madman threatened to turn out by no means so satisfactorily. This was a most respectable individual of the name of Mutten, who kept baths in the vicinity of Holborn—hot-baths, cold-baths, vapour-baths, sulphur-baths, shower-baths, sand-baths; in fact, every kind of bath—but the one which I have reason to remember most was his vapour-bath. I had been recommended this sudatorial treatment by my physician, who had also advised my patronising the establishment of Mr Mutten, as being a person not bitten with any new-fangled system of Turkish baths and the like, but steady, old-fashioned, and practical; though, for all that, Mr Mutten had been bitten by Something, as you shall presently hear. Perhaps, reader, you never took a vapour-bath, and do not even precisely know what

it is. Well, have you ever been employed as a deep-sea diver? No! You must, however, at least have seen the person who is so employed at the Polytechnic Institution in Regent Street. A vapour-bath, then, is in appearance exactly the converse of his attire. Your head is free, except that there is a collar of india-rubber—or some other evil-smelling substance—round your neck, to prevent the escape of the vapour, while the rest of your body is shut up in a gigantic helmet, like that in the *Castle of Otranto*; you are in a monstrous copper, with a fire under you, and make as much steam as a Christmas pudding, only you keep it all to yourself, for medicinal purposes. It would probably scald you to death, if you entered this copper after the operation had been long begun, and even the gradual accession of heat is far from pleasant, unless you happen to be one of that fortunate class 'upon whom,' in the graceful language of science, 'perspiration is easily induced.' That you are entirely helpless, being fastened in by bolts, which you have no hand to unfasten, is evident enough, and also that the situation is supremely ridiculous. In front of you is suspended a thermometer, so that you may superintend your own cooking to a turn, and there is always somebody in the room to see you are not overdone. This attendant was, in my case, Mr Mutten. I had submitted to this treatment eleven times, and was about to take my last and twelfth sudorifice. I noticed on this occasion, when I entered the room, that the proprietor of the establishment was somewhat moody and taciturn; but this he was apt to be, in consequence of the growing popularity of 'Hummons,' and divers other innovations from the East, which diminished the number of his customers.

I made some pleasant observation to him about the weather—to which he muttered a dissent—disrobed myself, entered the copper, and was bolted in.

'You shall have a good boil this morning, any way,' observed Mr Mutten, viciously poking the bath-fire with great vigour.

Now, really this was a very alarming observation from a person who seldom spoke at all, and when he did so, was always studiously respectful. I might have talked of having 'a good boil' but it was not for him to do so. The phrase 'any way,' too, was disagreeable; there could be only one way—namely, to be regulated by the thermometer. However, I thought it best to take no notice. There was a gleam about Mr Mutten's eye—not observed until it was too late, alas!—that made a vapour-bath quite unnecessary to me. I was in a perspiration from head to foot. Very soon, too, the heat beneath became a good deal more than I was accustomed to. 'Don't you think, my dear Mr Mutten,' said I persuasively, 'that the temperature is almost high enough?' and I nodded (which was all I could do) towards the instrument before me.

'No, I don't,' replied Mr Mutten curtly. 'I am going to try an experiment. I intend the mercury not only to get up as high as it possibly can, but to come down on the other side!'

Then, of course, I knew that I was in the power of a lunatic. He poked up the fire until the soles of my feet began to burn, and the wooden chair on which I sat—well, one would have thought it had been an iron one.

'Mr Mutten,' said I, 'it hurts.'

The proprietor of the bath being thus appealed to, came straight up to my defenceless nose, and tweaked it. 'I have longed to do that,' said he, 'ever since I first saw you in this tempting position. It is you who have built those baths in Jermyn Street—contradict me, and I'll twist your nose off—it is you who have introduced the Eastern System into this previously happy land. I mean to condense you to a single drop of vapour, take it up with a bit of blotting-paper, and enclose it in an envelope to the secretary of the Hamal. He says that our means are insufficient for practical purposes; let us put on more coals, and try.'

The torture began to be agonising. I now, for the first time, began to appreciate the determination with which Servetus and other roasted theologians maintained their opinions in spite of the arguments of the fagot. I felt my intellect would not hold out much longer, and seized with avidity upon a device which this man's conversation suggested to me.

'Do you know,' said I quietly, 'what the secretary of the Hamal says of you?'

'No!' cried Mr Mutten, with an air of the intensest interest. 'Do tell me, pray.'

'I can't,' returned I. 'It's a dead secret, so far as you are concerned. He gave me permission to tell it to your nephew, but not to you.'

'I will proceed to put more coals on,' observed the madman cunningly.

'Just as you please, Mr Mutten,' said I, as coolly as the situation permitted, for I knew that another shovelful would be my *coup-degrdes*; 'only, if I told your nephew, your nephew could tell you. Run and fetch him.'

In an instant he was gone, screaming 'Bill, Bill!' at the top of his voice, and there was I alone, painfully endeavouring to retain the powers of intelligence which I felt were fast ebbing away from me. Unless I did so, it was possible that Bill might not release me directly, from sheer ignorance of my position. I joined my voice, however, to that of his uncle, and the exertion seemed to afford me some sort of relief. My hearing was preternaturally quickened; I heard the young man's voice in the kitchen asking sulkily what the row was about; and when the old gentleman said something of a great secret about Turkish baths, he replied: 'Oh, stuff and nonsense; you are as mad as a hatter upon that subject.' Once more I raised my voice in one long cry of agony; then I heard feet coming up stairs three steps at a time, and next, I suppose, I fainted away. When I came to myself, I was stretched upon the sofa, wrapped in a sheet, and feeling as if that were my only skin. Mutten the younger sat beside me.

'Uncle and you were so interested in your talk together,' said he, 'that you forgot the thermometer. He is quite ashamed of himself on account of it, and has left me to see you comfortable. You should never talk to him about Turkish baths, it excites him so.'

'I never will again,' said I feebly.

'Not when you are having a vapour-bath, at all events,' observed the young man.

'No,' returned I solemnly, 'I never will.'

And I never did, and I don't advise anybody else to do so. I am bound to say, however, that Mr Mutten, Senior, was most respectful and well behaved upon the last occasion when I happened

to meet him, and that he has not the slightest recollection whatever of having attempted to 'condense' the present writer.

THE HORSES OF THE DESERT.

WHEN we say 'the Arab,' he who hears us is not certain whether we mean the horse or the man. The winged steed of the Sahara is, in one respect, a 'household word' with us, and yet, like a classical quotation in a lady's mouth, it is much more familiar with us than known. Our admiration for the animal is vague and legendary. When some sceptic tells us that the English race-horse is greatly its superior, we have no reasons to offer for the impression which we entertain to the contrary. I remember, years ago, a white Arab—and white is considered the most promising hue—starting for the Goodwood Cup. Its beautiful appearance excited great attention. The price said to have been paid for it was prodigious, and it had never run upon an English race-course before. 'The Ring,' however, the members of which are not easily swayed by romance and enthusiasm, did not 'fancy' the desert-born, and the result justified their coldness. He or she—for I forget the sex—bounded off with extreme velocity, and came in—last! My belief is that such would always be the case with Arabs entered for any of our *great* races; and yet there seems no doubt that for swiftness, endurance, and sagacity combined, the horses of the Sahara have no rivals. General Daumas, the French Consul at Mascara, accredited to the Emir Abd-el-Kader, and afterwards Central Director of the Arab Office of Algeria, has recently* let us know the whole truth with regard to these animals, and the treatment which they receive from their wandering masters. Of this last, which to us, as a horse-rearing nation, is most interesting, I am not prepared, writes he, 'to say that "This is right," or "This is wrong";' I say, simply, Right or wrong, this is what the Arabs do.' The question, Cannot our light cavalry be recruited from Algeria, instead of, as at present, from foreign countries, set the French general upon the most careful personal investigations into this subject; while, in addition, his friend the famous Emir has supplied him with copious remarks. These latter are, as was to have been expected, couched in rather too flowery language to be acceptable from a veterinary-surgeon point of view; but they are at least interesting, because genuine, and characteristic both of the hero and his race. This is the sort of letter Abdelkader is accustomed to write upon equine matters:

Praise be to the one God.

To Him who remains ever the same amid the revolutions of this world.

To our friend General Daumas.

Peace be with you, through the mercy and blessing of Allah, on the part of the writer of this letter, on that of his mother, his children, their mother, of all the members of his family, and of all his associates.

To proceed: I have read your questions, I address to you my answers.

Know, then, that it is admitted among us that Allah created the horse out of the wind, as he created Adam out of the mud.

He said to the south wind: 'I will that a creature

* *The Horses of the Sahara.* By E. Daumas. W. H. Allen & Co.

should proceed from thee—condense thyself'—and the wind condensed itself. Then came the Angel Gabriel, and took a handful of this matter, and presented it to Allah, who formed of it a dark bay-horse, &c., &c.

Then he signed him with the sign of glory and of good-fortune—a star in the middle of the forehead.

Thus the horse most esteemed is that which has a star on its forehead; and the Prophet has said: 'If I were to gather together in one spot all the horses of the Arabs, and make them race against one another, it is the chestnut which would outstrip the rest.'

Nevertheless, as I have said, the favourite colour for a horse among the Arabs is the White.

1. Take the horse white as a silken flag, without spot, with the circle of his eyes black.

2. The black. 'He must be as black as night without moon and stars.'

3. The bay. 'He must be nearly black, or streaked with gold.' The dark red one said to the dispute, 'Stop there.'

The chestnuts, the dappled grays, and the yellow duns come next. The coats despised are the roan and the piebald, of which latter hue it is ungraciously remarked:

Flee him like the pestilence, for he is own brother to the cow.

In spite of the praise that has been heaped upon the horse, he is certainly, in our own country, one of the most senseless and helpless of all animals; timid, uncertain, and requiring abundance of care and watchfulness. The reverse of this is the case with its cousin of the desert. In early youth, indeed, immense pains are lavished upon him, and he is rarely mounted before he is two years and a half old, but his education has been such that he is by that time almost qualified to take care both of himself and his master. When the rider dismounts, and wishes his steed to remain stationary, he has merely to pass the bridle over his head; he has never any reason to ask a man to hold his horse for him. At market, or elsewhere, he leaves him for hours without disquietude, and returns to find him standing stock-still. This has been taught by a very simple process. The bridle once over his head, and dragging on the ground, a slave is stationed beside him to tread upon it whenever the animal is about to go off, and so to give a disagreeable shock to the bars of the mouth. This is the only thing approaching to harshness in the training of the Arab—although, indeed, if the training should fail, there are spurs employed such as no European would dream of using. The Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals would have little scope for employment in Algeria. Should any children, too young to reason, tease or ill-use the horses tethered in front of the tent, the Arab wife will cry: 'Children, beat not the horses. Wretches, it is they who nourish you. Do you wish that Allah should curse our tent?' She does not spare her own husband, if he misuses his horse, but complains of him to the chief of the tribe. 'Oh, my lord, although he is all we have, yet my husband takes him on idle journeys, overrides him, taxes him beyond his strength. Scold him, I beseech you, in the name of Allah. Lead him back into the ways of our forefathers. Above all, however, don't tell him that it was I who suggested this to you.'

No sooner has the foal seen the light, than one of the bystanders takes it in his arms, and walks up and

down with it for some time, in the midst of almost inconceivable noise and uproar. It is supposed that a useful lesson is thus taught for the future: the animal, accustomed from its birth to horrible sounds, will never afterwards be frightened at anything.

To teach the foal to suck, a fig or a date soaked in milk, slightly salted, is put into his mouth. . . . But it is also necessary to accustom him to drink camel's and ewe's milk. They take a goatskin, used several years for holding milk, and fill it with air; then squeezing it gently, they blow up his nostrils a few times.

This last piece of education is essential in the desert, where water is often much scarcer than is milk; though, while there is any at all, the horse partakes of it, or monopolises it, to the exclusion of the human. He is treated even better than 'one of the family.'

The Arab horse is watered, however, only once in the twenty-four hours. He is often obliged to content himself with dates instead of barley; these are given to him before they are perfectly ripe, when their stones are soft, and are eaten stones and all. In the spring, he is turned out on the pastures; but in the summer, if his master can afford it, he gets a little barley. On this scanty fare, a good horse in the desert is expected, if necessary, to accomplish, for five or six successive days, distances of a hundred and twenty-five to a hundred and fifty miles: and after a couple of days' rest and good feeding, he will be quite well enough to repeat the feat. If he shakes himself at any resting-place, or paws the ground with his foot, it is held that there is no occasion to pull up in the journey; and if you would know at the end of a day of excessive fatigue how far you can yet depend upon your horse, get off his back, and pull him strongly by the tail: if he remains unmoved, you may still rely upon him. 'It is of no very rare occurrence to hear of a horse doing one hundred and eighty miles in twenty-four hours!' The requisites which the men of the desert look for in him are, that 'he should carry a full-grown man, his arms and a change of clothing, food for both his rider and himself, a flag even on a windy day, and if it be necessary, drag a dead body behind him.'

A horse of the Sahara is calculated to live from twenty to twenty-five years, and a mare from twenty-five to thirty; his prime is indicated by the following proverb:

Seven years for my brother,
Seven years for myself,
Seven years for my enemy.

The Arabs prefer mares to horses, but only for the three following reasons: 1. The pecuniary profit; for the stories that represent the sons of the desert turning their backs upon proffered treasure, and remounting the beloved steed that they cannot bring themselves to part with, are a little imaginary, and as much as four thousand pounds has been known to have been received for the progeny of a single mare. 2. Because the mare does not neigh like the horse in time of war—a most important matter. 3. Because she is less sensitive to hunger, thirst, and heat, and will feed on the same herbage as the sheep and camels.

The Arabs of Upper Asia have regular genealogical trees of their horses, in which the birth and parentage of a colt is affirmed by evidence such as would be taken in a court of justice; while among the tribe Annaya there are horses so priceless that

it is at least impossible even for great personages and wealthy merchants to pay in cash for them ; they give a number of bills, therefore, falling due at intervals of twelve months, or else bind themselves to pay an annuity for ever to the vendor and his descendants. But perhaps nothing exemplifies the high value put upon a horse by these wandering people so much as this fact, that, although delighting in war and bloodshed, they never kill a farrier ; they would as soon think of poisoning a well ; he has only to alight, and imitate with the two corners of his burnous—raising and depressing them by turns—the movement of the bellows, and his life is held as sacred as that of a herald or a priest among more civilised nations. On the other hand, if a farrier chance to grow rich, a quarrel is often fastened upon him, and a portion of his wealth taken away, and held in hostage, to prevent so desirable a neighbour quitting the district.

The Arab horse-dealer is not the cheat that his European brother commonly is, for he never resorts to any trickeries to disguise the bad points of his horse ; but he is most seductively eloquent upon the subject of his virtues.

'Uncover his back,' cries he, 'and satisfy thy gaze. Say not it is my horse, say it is my son. . . . He is pure as gold. His eyesight is so good that he can distinguish a hair in the night-time. In the day of battle, he delights in the whistling of the balls. He overtakes the gazelle. . . . He has no brother in the world ; it is a swallow. He listens to his flanks, and is ever watching the heels of his rider.'

It must not be concealed, however, that with all this honesty, and even chivalry, among the sons of the desert in respect to equine matters, there is also a good deal of horse-stealing. The protection of the Prophet is even invoked by persons bent upon this sort of enterprise ; and the twenty-first of the Mussulman month is considered the right time for setting out, and the night of the twenty-second the most favourable for putting the design into execution. Upon the other hand, an evil which has grown out of horse-training in this country to a colossal size, that of gambling on the turf, is strictly kept down among the Arabs. It is forbidden and considered disgraceful to bet upon the result of horse-races, although they themselves are authorised by the Mohammedan religion. It is enacted by the Koran that the course for trained steeds should be seven kilomètres, and for those untrained but three. Ten horses run in each race, of which only the three who come in last receive nothing ; and the prizes are given by the chiefs.

Contrary to the accepted opinion, the Arabs shoe their horses, although they take the shoes off in the spring. These are very light, of a soft pliant metal, and are put on cold. Their bridles have blinkers fitted to them—an indignity which is reserved in England almost solely for draught-horses. The Arab saddle is of wood, with a huge pommel, and a broad *troussequin* behind, high enough to protect the loins ; the whole being covered and held together without nails or pegs by a camel's skin. Suspended from the pommel is a sort of bag, called a *djebara*, containing several compartments for carrying bread, a mirror, soap, cartridges, shoes, a flint, and writing materials. 'I am convinced,' says General Daumas, 'that the sabretaches of our hussars had their origin in these *djebaras*.' The stirrups are broad and clumsy. Their lateral faces

gradually diminish so as to unite with the upper bar which supports the ring for the stirrup leathers. They are used very short, and the whole foot is thrust into them. The eye of these stirrups strikes against the leg-bone of him who rises in them, and renders them at first extremely painful ; but after a time the skin hardens, and an exostosis is formed, which destroys all sensibility. It is by these exostoses that a horseman is distinguished from a foot-soldier, and so clearly indeed, that in the province of Oran a certain Bey, having resolved to inflict an exemplary chastisement on a tribe that had revolted, put to death all who fell into his hands bearing these marks. He well knew that his anger was only vented on the horsemen.

LOST SIR MASSINGBERD.

CHAPTER XII.—THE COUNCIL OF WAR.

On the second morning after our arrival at the Dovecot, Mr Long called me into the dining-room, where I found Mr Gerard and another gentleman, who had come down by the night-mail, as I understood, from London. Although, I should think, not less than sixty-six years of age, he was dressed in the height of the then prevailing mode. He wore a snuff-coloured coat, the tails of which trailed from his chair upon the ground, whenever he was so fortunate as not to be sitting upon them ; the brass buttons at his back were nearly as large as the handles of an ordinary chest of drawers. A bunch of seals, each about the size of that peculiar to the Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, dangled from his fob. His pantaloons, which seemed to have shrunk in the washing, set off a pair of legs that were still not uncomely ; but what was most remarkable in his costume was an enormous muslin cravat, which, in combination with the ruffles of his shirt, gave him the aspect of a pouting pigeon. Unaccustomed as I then was to the toilet of persons of distinction, Mr Clint of Russell Square—for he it was—made a very strong impression upon me. As the family lawyer of the Heaths, and one who had always greatly interested himself in Marmaduke, he had been sent for by my tutor to give his opinion as to what steps should be taken respecting the future disposal of the poor lad. I guessed by his grave face that he had been put in possession, not only of all that had happened through the agency of Sir Massingberd, but of all that had been designed to happen.

'If you have any doubt still remaining, Mr Clint, as to the propriety of removing Marmaduke Heath from the custody of his uncle, observed my tutor, after introducing me to this venerable beau, 'I think this gentleman can dissipate it. Now, Peter, tell us, in confidence, what sort of footing do you consider your young friend and Sir Massingberd to stand upon—are they good'—

'Stop, stop, Mr Long,' interrupted the lawyer, taking an enormous pinch of snuff from a silver box, and holding up his laden fingers in a prohibitory manner ; 'we must not have any leading questions, if you please. Mr Meredith, it is most important that you state to us the truth, without mitigation or exaggeration. You heard your tutor's first inquiry, which was a most correct one. How does Mr Marmaduke Heath stand with respect to his uncle ?'

'Well, sir,' said I quietly, 'he stands, as it were,

upon the brink of a deep river, with his back towards a person who is bent upon pushing him in.'

A total silence ensued upon this remark. Mr Long and Mr Gerard interchanged very meaning glances.

'Very good,' returned the lawyer coolly, administering half the snuff to his nose, and dropping the other half among his shirt-ruffles. 'That is a form of speech, I suppose, by which you would imply that Marmaduke is afraid of his uncle?'

'Very much,' said I: 'afraid of his life.'

'And you have had no previous conversation upon this subject with either of these gentlemen—that is—you must forgive me if I press this somewhat hardly—they have never asked your opinion on the matter before?'

'Certainly not, sir.'

'You are speaking, too, I conclude, from your own observation of course, from your own knowledge of Mr Marmaduke Heath's sentiments and position, and not from any hearsay rumour?'

'I am perfectly convinced, Mr Clint,' returned I gravely, 'that Sir Massingberd Heath wishes to get rid of his nephew, and that Marmaduke knows it.'

'Then Sir Massingberd shall be gratified,' observed Mr Gerard with energy; 'he shall get rid of him from this day.'

'Stop, stop, my dear sir,' interposed the lawyer. 'Even supposing that all this is true, both the facts that I have received from you and Mr Long, and the surmises entertained by this young gentleman, we are still only at the threshold of the matter. From the manner in which Sir Massingberd expressed himself when he wrote to me to demand the custody of the boy, and from his whole conduct since, I am certain that he will not give up his position as guardian without a severe struggle. We must steadily look our difficulties in the face. Supposing—having been assured of Marmaduke's convalescence—he should send a post-chaise over here next week, or the week after, with a note, insisting upon his immediate return to Fairburn Park, what is to be done then?'

'I should send the post-chaise back again,' returned Mr Gerard calmly, 'with the verbal reply, that Mr Marmaduke was not coming.'

'But suppose he wrote to Marmaduke himself?'

'The reply would come from me all the same, Mr Clint.'

'But if Sir Massingberd appeals to the law?'

'He dare not!' exclaimed my host; 'his audacity, great as it is, stops short of that. If he did, as sure as the sun is shining, I would meet him with the charge of attempted murder.'

Mr Clint took out of his other coat-tail a second snuff-box, which he never made use of except in cases of great emergency. 'You are prepared to go that length, are you?'

'I am, sir,' returned Mr Gerard firmly.

'You have not a shadow of foundation for such an assertion,' pursued Mr Clint reflectively. 'The slander will be pronounced malicious; you will be cast in swinging damages.'

'That is possible,' remarked my host; 'but there, nevertheless, will be such revelations of Sir Massingberd's mode of life, as may well cause the Chancellor to reflect whether Fairburn Hall is a fitting educational establishment for a minor.'

'John Lord Eldon is not an ascetic.'

'I know it, sir' broke forth Mr Gerard; 'I am

well aware that he is a heartless fellow, as dissipated, as dishonest,* and —'

'Sir,' interrupted Mr Clint with irritation, 'I will not listen to such mad words. You may utter them, of course, in your own house, but not to me. This is the talk of those who would subvert all authority.'

'They are not afraid to speak evil of dignities,' murmured my tutor.

'I do not speak evil of dignities, my dear sir, but only of the rogues who fill them,' exclaimed Mr Gerard laughing. 'However, I beg your pardon, gentlemen; the remark escaped me quite involuntarily. You must be aware, however, Mr Clint, that my Lord Eldon is not absolutely an ascetic.'

'I was about to say, sir,' observed the old lawyer stiffly, 'that his lordship is not so tenderly alive to the necessity of moral training as some of his friends would wish, and he has a strong respect for natural authority. He might lean, therefore, towards Sir Massingberd's view of the question—with whom, indeed, he is personally not unacquainted—and might be induced somewhat to palliate his way of life.'

'Sadler than orphans, yet not fatherless, are those in Eldon's keeping,' murmured Mr Gerard. 'Still,' continued he, in a louder tone, 'the charge of attempted murder, Mr Clint, would have this effect, that even if Marmaduke were re-consigned to his uncle's care—which Heaven forbid—the eyes of the world would be upon Sir Massingberd, and he would not venture to work him a mischief. In the meantime, it rests with us to take good care that he has not the chance of doing so.'

'And now,' resumed Mr Clint, after a pause, 'supposing that all is arranged thus far to repel Sir Massingberd's claims, there is another matter to be considered. It would take long to explain the details of the case, but you must understand that the Heath property is very peculiarly situated. Sir Massingberd, who is in the enjoyment of it for life, cannot raise a shilling upon it; while Marmaduke does not possess a shilling, although the prospective heir of such vast wealth. They would be, in short, at present a couple of beggars—such is the naked fact—but for a certain arrangement of my own, with which nobody else had anything to do. A small annual sum is paid to Sir Massingberd for the maintenance of his nephew, and another, solely on the latter's behalf, for that of the estate. It is a most beautifully intricate affair from first to last,' pursued the lawyer withunction: 'here are two relatives, who mutually support one another, and have yet every reason-looking at the matter in a rather worldly way, of course—to wish each other dead. Sir Massingberd could borrow plenty of money, if the usurers were only confident that he had the power as well as the will to make away with his nephew. There would be even less difficulty under ordinary circumstances in procuring a loan for Marmaduke; but a delicate boy, whose uncle and guardian is bent upon putting a violent end to him—you see that renders the security so very slight. Altogether, it is certainly one of the nicest cases. It is not only a question of responsibility; there are always plenty of people ready to take any amount of that

* I am at a loss to understand why good Mr Gerard should have thus expressed himself concerning Lord Eldon, unless it were that Shelley's case may have just been decided about that time.

at a sufficient premium ; but who will undertake the pecuniary charge of the lad if he is withdrawn from his uncle's roof ? Sir Massingberd, of course, will never give up one tittle of the allowance intrusted to him to expend, except upon such compulsion as we should scarcely venture to employ. There are three years wanting to the boy's majority ; and even when he has arrived at that, and should be willing to promise ample repayment, he may die before his uncle still, who has a constitution of adamant, when those who have maintained him may whistle for the money they have expended. The expression may be coarse,' added Mr Clint apologetically, 'but I think it conveys my meaning.'

'I thank you, Mr Clint,' observed my tutor, after a little pause, 'for putting this matter before us so bluntly and decidedly. For my part, I am far from being a rich man ; but, on the other hand, there are no persons who have a better claim upon my resources than my dear young friend and pupil, Marmaduke Heath. That he will repay me, if he survive his uncle, I am more than assured ; and if he die early, I shall not regret that the remainder of his young life has been rendered happy through my means, although it may have cost me a few comforts.'

I stooped down and said a few words in my tutor's ear. 'No, Peter, no,' continued he ; 'you are a good lad, and your father is doubtless generous enough to comply with your wishes ; but we must not resort to such a distant source in this emergency, indeed. Mr Clint, do you think that a hundred and forty to a hundred and sixty pounds a year might be made sufficient to keep Marmaduke with respectability ?'

'Half your annual stipend, eh, Mr Long, eh ?' ejaculated the lawyer. 'Bless my soul, how this snuff gets in one's eyes ! Such a sum should be quite sufficient ; I think that would be found more than enough. He cannot live at your Rectory, of course ; that would be almost as bad as at the Hall ; but there are plenty of spare rooms in my house in town ; he has stayed there before, so that that can be done, we know—Marmaduke and I are old friends.—No, no, it will not hurt me ; such a course cannot bring me into greater antagonism with Sir Massingberd than I am in already. I am always at daggers-drawn with him. He is for ever cutting down trees that don't belong to him, or selling heirlooms that are no more his than mine, or embroiling himself with me, the appointed guardian of the property, in some way or other. Yes, I'll take the lad, Mr Long, come what will of it.'

'You will do nothing of the kind,' exclaimed my host energetically ; 'you honest lawyer, and very worthy man ; and you, you good priest—contradictions in terms, both of you—you shall not give away half your annual stipend, or my name is not Harvey Gerard. I have done each of you a very grievous wrong in thought, if not in word, and I hereby beg your pardons. It is possible, I perceive, to be a Tory, and yet preserve, if not a conscience, at least a heart.'

My tutor smiled ; Mr Clint bowed his acknowledgments.

'With regard to Mr Marmaduke Heath, however,' pursued our host, 'that young gentleman must be my especial charge. From this day until the period when he comes into his property, or lies

in need of decent interment, as the case may be, he is my guest ; or if my house is distasteful to him, I will advance him whatever sums he may reasonably require for his maintenance elsewhere. Please to consider that that is settled, gentlemen.'

'Whatever we may think of the political opinions of Mr Harvey Gerard,' observed Mr Clint with feeling, 'his name has always been associated with acts of matchless generosity.'

'Always, always,' echoed Mr Long ; then added reflectively : 'he has paid the fines of half the rogues in the country, and bailed the other half who have been committed to prison.'

A simultaneous burst of merriment from his three hearers greeted this naive remark of my unconscious tutor.

'I have done so upon one occasion, I confess,' replied Mr Gerard good-naturedly. 'I became surety, in 1791, for the good-behaviour of a poor Birmingham rioter, as I thought, who turned out to be a government spy. However, I assure you, generosity has nothing to do with my present intentions with respect to young Heath. My income is sufficiently large to admit of my accommodating the poor lad with ease, even if the repayment, sooner or later, were not almost certain, as it really is. But, besides all this, I must confess that the undertaking affords me exceeding satisfaction. Mr Long, you are, I have heard, an enthusiastic fisherman : that is no common pleasure which you feel when your rod is bowed by some enormous trout, cunning and strong, who may break the whole of your tackle, and get away after all, but who also may be landed helpless on the bank, a victim to your skill and patience. That is exactly the sport which I promise myself with Sir Massingberd Heath. If he were one whit less greedy, less formidable, less pitiless, I should feel less hostility towards him ; he has fortunately no redeeming point. I have hated Tyranny all my life, and I hate this man, who seems to be the very Embodiment of it. He makes his boast that no one has ever stood between himself and his wicked will. Let us see what he will make of Harvey Gerard.'

The speaker drew himself up proudly, but certainly not with unbecoming pride. His form dilated as he spoke, his voice grew deep without losing its distinctness, and into his mild eyes a sternness crept as when the frost congeals the lake. But for a spic of haughtiness, which to some might have appeared even arrogance, he might have stood for St Michael in his contest with the foul Fiend, and have personified the Spirit of Good defying the Spirit of Evil.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE GIPSY CAMP.

After not a little opposition upon the part of Mr Long, who would have willingly borne his share in Marmaduke's expenses, it was settled that Mr Gerard should be the young man's host, if he could only be suffered to retain him in defiance of the power of Sir Massingberd ; his home, however, was not to be the Dovecot, which was judged to be too much exposed, by its proximity to Fairburn, to the machinations of the enemy. The Gerards were to remove to their town residence, in Harley Street, as soon as their guest was fit to accompany them. At first, his progress was tedious, but he grew rapidly convalescent as soon as he

was able to exchange his bed for a sofa. Never was sick man more hospitably treated, more graciously tended. Mr Gerard possessed that almost feminine gentleness of manner which is generally found in persons of his peculiar organisation. His sympathy, at least as easily aroused as his antagonism, was now deeply enlisted in favour of Marmaduke for his own sake; he recognised his talents, and the beauty and tenderness of his mind, and won him from the melancholy that overhung it by pleasant studious talk; while the young man's heart, thrilling responsive to every touch of kindness, turned towards him, and expanded like a flower in the sun. As for Lucy, what rudest health would I not have exchanged for Marmaduke's languor, as he lay and listened to her clear sweet voice, now singing some cheerful ballad to enliven him, now reading aloud some tale so musically that itself seemed song! He could read to himself but little as yet, and if he did take up a book, his eyes refused to regard it, but followed the lovely girl, wherever she moved, with admiration.

'This happiness is too great to last, Peter,' he would often say; 'it will all fade one day, I know, and leave me desolate. What man living is worthy to possess yon glorious creature? I feel as though I had no right even to love her. Yet, great Heaven! how I do love her! How unconscious she is of her perfect sweetness! How she graces the meanest thing which she may set herself to do! Her presence seems to breathe very life into me; I then forget everything but her—even Sir Massingberd. To return to him would be death indeed—death, death!' Then he would sink back, as if prostrated with the thought, and so remain despairingly despondent until he heard Lucy's voice, or laugh, or footprint. All this was bitter for me to bear. I was glad when Mr Long suggested to me that he thought it was no longer necessary for me to remain with Marmaduke, and that I should return to Fairburn Rectory and my studies. Still, my heart was heavy upon that morning which was to be the last I was to spend under the same roof with Lucy Gerard. Within the last few weeks—nay, it had happened in a few hours—I had Loved and I had Lost. If there be any to read this in whose eyes these words have meaning, they will pity me. I do not match such grief, indeed, for a single instant against the sorrow a man must feel for the loss of the loved companion of his life—against the lone wretchedness of recent widowhood; but it was a grievous blow. I wished Marmaduke and Mr Gerard 'good-bye' without quite knowing that I did so.

'Good-bye, Mr Meredith,' said Lucy, and though her voice was even lower and sweeter than usual, it wounded me like a knife.

'Why don't you call him Peter, Lucy?' exclaimed her father laughing. 'I think it would be more civil, now that we are going to lose him.'

'Thank you, sir,' said I gratefully; and thereupon she did say 'God bless you, Peter,' very, very kindly.

Ever since that morning, she called me so; but I was Peter to all of them, you see, as well as to her. Then, too, I called her Lucy, and though for the first and last time, I shall never forget it.

I couldna say mair, but just 'Fare ye weel, Lucy!'
Yet that I will mind till the day that I dee.

Then I mounted my horse—my luggage having already preceded me—and slowly took my way towards Fairburn. My lifeblood seemed to ebb with every step. The clang of the gate that shut me out from the last foot of ground belonging to the Dovecot, sent a shudder through me like a knell. I was on the very spot where Marmaduke had met with the accident that had been so nearly fatal. Supposing it had killed him! Supposing—I thanked God that I was able to thank Him from an honest heart that it had not done so.

Then I felt a little better. Having ascended the hill, I put my horse into a sharp canter upon the common, and the cool air through which I swiftly passed refreshed me. The hollow in which the encampment had been was now deserted, and only the round bare spot amid the green, which is the gipsy autograph, announced that it had ever been there. Some miles further on, however, a little brown-legged boy, evidently of that wandering fraternity, suddenly emerged from a fir plantation, and stood before me in the road as if to beg. I was already feeling in my pocket for a penny, when, shewing his white teeth in gratitude, he shook his head, and coming close to my stirrup, exclaimed: 'You are the gentleman from Mr Gerard's, sir, are you not? Would you please to come and see Granny Rachel?'

In an instant, I remembered the pocket-flask, which I had entirely forgotten since the day in which it came into my possession; for all I knew, it was then lying yet in the drawing-room at the Dovecot.

'Yes, my boy, that will I,' returned I; 'but I fear I have not brought her what she wants.'

He looked up in the bright interrogative manner peculiar to his tribe, so different to the stolid wonder of the agriculturist.

'She wants you, sir, as I understood. This is the sixth day that she has set me to watch for you by this roadside. Will you please to follow me?'

The boy started off at a pace which compelled me to move too fast for further questioning; and skirting the plantation for a hundred yards, stopped at the entrance of a roadway leading through the wood. The coming winter had not yet turned the broad green track to mud, and it ran so straight and far, that the pine-trees seemed to stand on either side like a continuous wall, with nothing but the blue heaven for their limit. This landscape of right lines would have delighted a painter of the Pre-Raphaelite school, it looked so stiff and unnatural; but pursuing this track for a little distance, and then plunging over a ditch and bank into the plantation itself, we suddenly came upon a scene which would have suited Morland's pencil. A low tent, with half-naked but merry children crawling in and out; a she-ass and her foal; a handsome male Epicurean, lying on his back, smoking a short, well-coloured pipe, the hue of which precisely resembled that of his own skin; a young girl in scarlet mantle, and with earrings of great splendour, gathering fir-cones to feed the flames which licked around an iron pot suspended on four sticks, piled musket-fashion; and an old crone, sitting by the same, and picking the feathers from a bird, which, had the time of year been beyond the end of September, I should have certainly taken for a hen-pheasant. But to suppose this, would have been to suppose an infraction of the Game Laws! The walnut-stained children

stopped their play as I approached, and stood in various attitudes of wonder, like beauteous bronzes; the man turned over on his side, and opened his slumberous eyes a hairsbreadth; the girl flashed one quick comprehensive glance upon me, and then resumed her occupation. The old woman nodded familiarly without rising, and observed quietly: 'So you are come at last, Peter Meredith. I trust you have brought good news of Marmaduke Heath.'

'He is better,' said I, 'much better; and he knows who brought him help, and is very grateful. You have been expected daily at the Dovecot, where something more substantial than mere thanks is waiting for you.'

'Rachel Liversedge desires neither silver nor gold,' returned the old woman: 'she has had her reward already, if what you say be true. It was not for love of the boy that I did what I did; he has too much evil blood in him to earn my liking. But I am glad as though he were my own son that he will live.'

'Carew,' cried she triumphantly, 'no wonder *bura* Sir Massingberd looked *kala* as ourselves.'

'Oh, the great man looks black, does he?' said I.

The old woman dropped the bird, the girl her fir-cones, and both stared wildly at me, as though my voice had come from the clouds; the man sprang to his feet, and uttered a cry of wonder.

'What! do you speak our tongue?' cried he.

'Nay; you speak mine,' returned I calmly. '*Bura* is great; and *kala*, which you call *kala*, is black, of course; everybody knows that who knows Hindustane.'

Then the three burst out together in a language one word out of four of which seemed to be more or less familiar to me; as for understanding what they said, of course it was simply impossible; but no matter, I had established my reputation. From that moment, I felt myself to be the honoured guest of the family. Would I smoke? Would I eat? Would I drink? I was thirsty, and I said that I would gladly take some water—which, at a venture, I called paineen.'

'Pawnee!' cried they, extravagantly delighted. 'He talks like a true Gipsy; and only look! is he not dark-skinned?'

The few words that my old ayah had taught me in India had thus procured me a hearty welcome in a Midshire fir-plantation.

'Sit down by me, Peter Meredith, my son,' exclaimed the old woman; 'and do you fetch him water, Mina.'

I dismounted, and did as I was bid; while the young girl took a pitcher, and presently brought it filled from a running stream near by, and offered it to me, like another Rebecca. But her grandmother—for such she was—cried: 'Stop! let me put something in it;' and produced from her pocket the self-same flask which she herself had given me a few weeks ago, and which I had thought was left behind at the Dovecot.

'Why, I was blaming myself for not having brought you that thing back to-day,' said I; 'I never heard of your coming to claim it.'

'Nor did I, young gentleman,' returned the old woman proudly. 'Harvey Gerard is too kind a man to be visited when one is not in need. That was why I left his house that day, directly I had told what had befallen Marmaduke Heath: I did not wish him to think I waited for my reward. He returned me this with his own hands. He is not

one of your proud ones. When we had the fever here—Mina, darling, you remember who came to see you, and saved your life?'

'Ah, yes!' cried the girl, clasping her dark hand, which gleamed with tawdry rings; 'and his daughter, too, how I love her!'

There was a little pause; I felt my ears tingle—my cheeks burn. I did not dare look up from the ground.

'Lucy Gerard is very fair,' whispered the old woman; 'she will make a good and loving wife; then, she added roguishly, and in that gipsy tone which smacks so of the race-course: 'Shall I tell your fortune, my pretty gentleman?'

'No, I thank you,' said I hastily. 'I have no great confidence in your information as to the future. With respect to the past, on the other hand, you can doubtless satisfy me, if you will. I have a great curiosity to know how you became possessed of yonder flask with the Heath griffin.'

'Peter Meredith,' returned the old woman very gravely, 'you have asked me to tell you a sad story, and one to relate which will cost me much. It is not our custom, however, to refuse the first request of a new friend. But before I begin, let me ask you a question in my turn. Has it never struck you why Sir Massingberd Heath has not long ago taken to himself a young wife, and begotten an heir for the bonny lands of Fairburn, in despite of his nephew?'

Until that moment, the idea had never crossed my brain; but no sooner was it thus mooted than I wondered greatly at the short-sightedness of those among whom Marmaduke's affairs had been so lately discussed, and in particular at that of Mr Clint, who, as a lawyer, should surely have at once foreseen such a contingency. 'Well,' said I, 'I confess that, for my part, I have never thought of it; but there cannot be much danger of Sir Massingberd's becoming a wooper now—why, what young woman would be won by such as he?'

'What young woman would *not* be won?' replied Rachel Liversedge grimly. 'Think you that his white head and stony heart would weigh too heavy in the balance against his title and the reversion of his lands? Remember, all that is around us, and all that we could see from yonder hill to the right hand and to the left—pasture and cornfield, farm and park—would fall to the offspring of her who would venture, for a few years, to be Lady Heath. Peter, there is one maiden in Midshire, known to you and me, who would not consent to do this thing, though the offer were thrice as splendid; but I doubt if there be more than one.'

'If that is so,' said I, 'why does not Sir Massingberd marry?'

'The answer to that is the story I am about to tell you,' returned Rachel.

DEADLY WEAPONS.

It has been said by Lafontaine, that a man who was shipwrecked and cast upon an island, at once knew that he was in a civilised land, and amongst a Christian people, because he saw a gibbet. This may appear at first sight a somewhat singular conclusion for a man to arrive at, yet we shall, upon reflection, discover that it was an opinion actually founded upon observation, for the gibbet is an

'institution' adopted only by those people who have a certain amount of civilisation. Another apparently contradictory condition is, that we may to a great extent discover the amount of civilisation and intellect that prevails in a nation if we know the means which they adopt to kill one another, or to get rid of their enemies. To kill, at least by wholesale, is an art, and one which, from the earliest periods, has been deeply studied by the most skilful men of every nation. That man who has been successful in inventing some new process of slaying his fellow-creatures, has invariably risen rapidly to eminence, and, for a time at least, has been the idol of his people. There is much that is deeply interesting, and at the same time instructive, in examining the various processes by which men were to be killed at different periods, and by different nations, and to trace the rapid advance that has been made at certain periods, whilst at other times one system has been continued during many centuries.

The first account that we possess of man killing man is when Cain rose up against his brother Abel and slew him. The details of this act are not given, and we are therefore unable to state the nature of the weapon that Cain employed. If, however, we examine the weapons used by nations in various stages of civilisation, we find that these may be divided into two classes: the first being those used to inflict blows or stabs whilst they are retained in the hand; the second, those flung or discharged, and which consequently leave the hand.

Although it is an undoubted fact that young gentlemen have a tendency to employ projectile weapons, such as stones, &c., merely for amusement, yet a young nation usually adopt hand-weapons before they arrive at a knowledge of projectiles; and thus barbarous tribes generally adopt clubs and a species of knife before they take to javelins or bows and arrows, a proper use of the latter weapons indicating a certain amount of civilisation.

In most tropical countries, there are trees the wood of which is very tough and heavy. Clubs of a formidable description can be made from it, and thus the natives have always a plentiful arsenal from which they can obtain the raw material from which their weapons are manufactured. In some cases, the savage is content to use the branch of a tree after it has been simply rounded and scraped, and then cut to any required length; but other and more fastidious tribes prefer to cut and trim their club, so that it is furnished with a large knob at the end. The most formidable weapons of this description are those made from the horn of the rhinoceros, and used by several African tribes, for these, from their weight and toughness, would, when wielded by a powerful arm, smash the skull of a European as easily as an egg could be smashed by a common walking-stick.

There is no very wide field for ingenuity in connection with clubs and similar weapons, consequently, even amongst nations far removed from each other, we do not find any great variety. In

the way of knives, swords, and daggers, however, every species of form and size has been tried, and been popular at different periods. Great care and skill have been employed in the construction of the blades of swords and daggers, many men having obtained fortune and eminence merely in consequence of some minute advantage to which they had attained in the formation of these weapons. When men cased themselves in armour, it was, of course, of the utmost importance to obtain an offensive weapon of such a nature as to penetrate or damage this iron shell, for a man armed with a sword of highly-tempered steel would to a certain extent be able to overcome his enemy's defences. Thus, a sort of rivalry was maintained between the armourer and the sword-maker, just as there now is between the constructors of guns and of iron plates for ships.

Great variety exists in connection with projectile weapons, even independent of the application of gunpowder: there are slings, stones, javelins or assagais, bows, cross-bows, arbalists, catapulte, baliste, blow-pipes, boomerangs, &c.

It would naturally occur to every thinking being, that the velocity and range of stone cast by hand would be due to the rate at which the hand and arm of the caster could be moved, and thus, other conditions being the same, the longer the arm, the more rapidly would a stone be cast. Thus, some artificial means by which to increase the range of a stone would naturally be thought of, and the first imperfect sling would be produced.

Slings are of very ancient date. David slew Goliath by the aid of this weapon, and they seem to have been very generally used in war about the same period. Amongst barbarous tribes, however, the sling is not nearly so universal a weapon as the javelin or spear, although it is one of an equally simple description.

Under the names of spears, javelins, and assagais, there are several very able aids when we are desirous of killing; the general construction is in all cases the same, although there is a great difference in the details. To an iron, bone, or hard-wood end, there is attached a haft of light straight wood, the two being firmly bound together, the iron or bone being usually let into the wood. The heavy end barely exceeds one-fourth of the whole length of the weapon, which amounts to about six or seven feet.

The Kaffirs on the frontier of the Cape Colony are amongst the most expert in the use of the light-throwing spear. Their weapon is termed the assagai, and is constructed as follows: A straight piece of stick, about five feet long, and half an inch thick at the but-end, is selected, and rounded with a knife. A piece of iron, about two feet long, is then welded into the shape of a spear-head, and the end that is to enter the wood is heated to a red heat, and in this state is allowed to burn into the wooden haft or handle; thus it enters the wood without splitting it, a condition difficult to obtain by any other means. In order to secure the iron and wood more firmly together, the Kaffir procures the sinews of a freshly-killed animal, and whilst these are wet, he wraps them and fastens them tightly round the wood, over the part in which the iron has been burned; then, when these sinews become dry, they contract, and thus hold firmly the wood and iron. Another and a very ingenious plan for keeping the wood and iron together, is to take a piece of skin, of about four or five inches, from the tail of a calf.

The skin is taken off so that it remains in the shape of a small tube. This tube is slipped over the small wooden end of the assagai, and worked up until it encases that part of the handle in which is the iron. Some judgment is required in order to select a portion of the tail of the requisite size, and which, when it contracts, shall fit very tightly.

The most skilful amongst these tribes can cast an assagai nearly one hundred yards. At a distance of forty or fifty yards, they are almost certain to hit a man, who, if struck with the full force of the spear, would be transfixed by it; instances being known of the spear-head having been driven through a man's body so far as to protrude more than two feet on the opposite side to that at which it entered. Some of the spear-throwing savages have adopted a plan by means of which they can obtain an additional range to their spears—this is to cast them from the end of a broadish stick, into which they are inserted, thus bringing the sling principle to bear upon the spear. By this means, the range of their weapons is increased by at least one half, and the penetrating power in like manner augmented.

One of the most ingenious and original of savage weapons is the boomerang. This singular arm is used by the Australian native, and possesses an individuality of its own. Whilst there is a strong family-likeness between the spears, javelins, and bows and arrows of various nations that occupy positions the most remote from each other, we find that the boomerang is alone used by the native of the New World. It is a weapon which requires the most careful construction, and it is highly probable that as much time, thought, and care have been employed by the Australians to construct the best model for a boomerang, as the English gunmaker has devoted to the manufacture of a gun-barrel. The boomerang is formed of very hard wood, and is somewhat of the shape of an arm bent nearly at right angles. It is flattish, and sharper at one edge than at the other. The Australian, it is said, forms his boomerang in the rough by placing his heels together, and turning his toes out, so that his feet are at right angles to each other; he then traces out the remaining two sides of a square from toe to toe, and this gives the rough outline for his weapon. The great peculiarity of the boomerang is, that when skilfully thrown, it will, if it miss the object aimed at, return through the air to the place from whence it was cast, and thus re-supply its owner with his weapon, this being quite a novelty in the character of projectiles. It is said that this weapon will inflict most serious wounds, and that even large animals are overcome by its aid.

Another weapon which has been highly developed by savages is the blow-pipe. The pea-shooter is, we believe, tolerably well known to most young gentlemen whose education has been attended to in England. Now, there are savages who use a sort of pea-shooter twelve or fourteen feet in length, and from which poisoned arrows are blown to a distance of a hundred yards. The most celebrated of the tribes who use this weapon are those who inhabit the northern portion of South America; and so fatal do these people find their blow-pipes, that they actually prefer them to the rough guns which they can alone procure from civilised traders. The blow-pipes used by these natives consist of a tube which is made out of a reed that grows in the country. The reed is of a very singular growth,

and appears as though it were intended for the purpose to which it is put, for although, as mentioned, it is used of a length of twelve or fourteen feet, yet there is no perceptible difference in the diameter of the two ends of the reed. This reed is carefully inserted within a bamboo tube, so as to protect it from external damage. The pith is carefully pushed out, and the interior is then as smooth as glass, and offers, therefore, no opposition to the passage of the arrows.

A small stick, about the size of a lady's knitting-needle, forms the foundation of the arrow. Some wild cotton is fastened to the end of this, and thus does away with the windage. The poison, which is thick and glutinous, is laid on about the point; and thus armed, the South American savage is ready to kill. A strong pair of lungs, and some skill, are requisite to send the arrow with its full force; but even a weak person would be much surprised at the force with which his arrow is propelled by means of a slight puff of breath. These weapons are used principally against birds, which are 'potted' as they sit in the trees. When any creature such as a monkey is required to be slain, the same savages use an arrow, the barbed end of which remains in the wound, whilst the wooden end may be pulled out with ease; the monkey, when wounded, seizes and extracts with his hands or paws the wooden part of the arrow; the barbed poisoned iron however remains, and usually produces death in a very few minutes.

Great secrecy is maintained amongst those members of the savage community who possess a knowledge of the component parts of the poison used for these arrows. That 'knowledge is power' is perfectly understood, and holds good in this instance, for he who possesses a knowledge of the composition can drive a very hard bargain with his less skilful neighbour, when he has a supply on hand, and his neighbour has none.

When we take stock of the nations who use the poisoned arrow, we find that they are those in whose country poisonous snakes are very common. Now, it is not entirely from the poison-bags of venomous snakes that the savage procures his poison; such a proceeding would yield him but a very small supply, and the poison used by the savage acts more quickly even than that of serpents on their victims; but it is highly probable that the idea of using poison occurred to the savage in consequence of observing the effect produced upon animals by the bite of a snake, and he was then set to experimentalise, in order to obtain the most fatal composition for his purpose. It is not unusual for the nations near those who use poison in war or in the chase, to exclaim against such practices, and to assert that it is cowardly; thus, the Kaffirs in Africa despise the Bushmen, because the latter use poisoned arrows; perhaps, however, the application of the 'sour-grapes' fable may hold good in this instance, for the Kaffirs are utterly ignorant of any composition suitable to use as poison for their spears.

From east to west, and from north to south, throughout the world, almost every nation either uses or has used the bow and arrow. It is a most formidable weapon when used by skilled men; the accuracy attained by it, and the length of range, being such as to render it most efficient as a means of killing. Before we refer more in detail to bows and arrows, we must speak of a principle

which holds good in all weapons of this description, and which we may be able to describe by means of the word *momentum*. If any solid body, such as a stone, were moving at the rate of ten feet in one second of time, and weighed two pounds, then we might say that the stone had a 'momentum' of twenty pounds; that is, its velocity per second multiplied by its weight would amount to twenty. If another stone weighing one pound moved at the rate of twenty feet per second, then this stone would have a momentum of twenty. Let us now examine how this momentum is connected with a bow and arrow, and the flight of the latter. We will suppose that we have before us a bow ready for use. We make ready an arrow, and then holding the bow firmly, we draw back the string. If we had an indicator, which would shew us what amount of force we had employed to bend the bow, we might find that it was perhaps twenty pounds. We should also discover that the stronger the bow was, the more slowly was it necessary to draw it out; thus, a bow that required a pulling power of eighty pounds, could only be pulled out at half the speed with which we could draw one requiring only forty-pound power. If, when we released the bowstring, and allowed the elasticity of the bow to bring the string into its original position, there was an opposing weight equal to that exerted to bend the string, then this weight would be moved at exactly the same speed as that at which the hand drew out the string. If, however, the weight were merely one-half that employed to draw the string, then the weight would be moved at double the speed, and so on, the momentum of the two being equal. Taking, then, a case: we will suppose that we exerted a force of forty pounds to draw a bow; the arrow actually might weigh three or four ounces, but as it rested horizontally on the hand, it would probably not exert a resistance of more than two ounces against the bowstring, which, when released, would move at the rate of about three hundred and twenty feet in one second, and yet its momentum would be the same as that of the hand when drawing the bow. The heavier the arrow, of course the less would be its first velocity; for an arrow weighing the most would possess an equal momentum, although moving with a less velocity. In most cases, however, the strength of the bow is so great that scarcely any perceptible difference is seen in the velocity of an arrow, whether it weigh an ounce or two, more or less. The rapidity, however, with which a bow regains its original position, causes the velocity of the arrow, and therefore the more elastic and strong the bow, the longer is the range of the arrow discharged therefrom. It would be at once evident to the most reasonable mind, that the greater the difficulty experienced in bending a bow, the greater would be its disposition to return to its first form, and therefore the more rapidly would the arrow be discharged from it. Then, as there must be a limit to the strength of the human arm, it would follow that, if by any artificial mechanical means a bow of enormous strength could be bent, and the bowstring drawn back slowly, and then released instantaneously, a very great amount of velocity and range would be obtained. Now, this mechanical feat was accomplished in the olden time with the cross-bow; and although we in the present day do not think much of these weapons, as aids to killing our fellow-

creatures, yet some three or four hundred years ago, the actual realisation of such a discovery must have produced no small noise in the world.

Fancy the consternation that must have prevailed amongst many valiant knights who had invested no small sums of money in suits of Spanish armour, which had been proved and found arrow-proof—at least proof against arrows from a long-bow—when they became aware that, by an artful mechanical contrivance, a bolt or arrow could be discharged with sufficient force to penetrate their hitherto invulnerable shell. Such a discovery was to them most serious, and one which would produce quite a revolution in their proceedings. In the present day, the peer and the peasant who enter the battle-field take their chance alike, and the enemy's bullets are no respecters either of purse or pedigree. In the days of bows, arrows, and armour, wealth, at least, might, if invested in armour, obtain almost invulnerability, unless some arm stalwart beyond that of the mass, and skilled in the highest degree, pulled a bowstring, and sent an arrow with more than usual force. The mechanical appliances brought to bear on the cross-bow were, therefore, an epoch in the art of killing, for they, to a certain extent, did away with the protecting power of armour.

Much has been said and written with regard to the skill of various people in the use of the bow and arrows. No country in the world was formerly more famed than England for producing skilful bowmen. The cause of this excellence is, of course, to be looked for, not in any great natural gift, but in the rewards and encouragements given for superiority in archery, just as in the present day England will produce thousands of skilful riflemen as long as a reward is held out for individuals to become so.

It is stated—and apparently on very good authority—that a range of six hundred yards has been obtained with an arrow, and that to hit, five times out of six, a mark six inches in diameter, and distant one hundred yards, was not an unusual performance for a first-class archer.

The catapult and balista were to bows, arrows, and slings what cannon in the present day are to rifles and fowling-pieces: they were the heavy artillery of the period, and were used for the purpose of casting huge stones against walls or doors, as also against masses of men. They were ponderous machines, requiring enormous power to move them; but, in the olden time, everything went on more slowly than at present, so that they did not then appear very much out of place. When we examine and find how much labour and thought was devoted to the construction and perfection of these machines, we are reminded of the singular steps and progress which appear to regulate discoveries. It seems as though men went on improving and altering some machine or system until they had reached as near as possible to perfection; then, suddenly, a discovery is made, and an entirely new principle is brought to light—one, in fact, so important as to render all past systems weak and comparatively useless. The discoverer, of course, passes through a fire of persecution and opposition, and probably dies before his idea is appreciated; but Time, the great revealer, at length reveals his worth, and a monument is raised to his memory by the grandchildren of the men who perhaps tortured him.

For example, bows and arrows had attained to the greatest perfection, and men had become most skilful archers, when the force of gunpowder was discovered, this gunpowder causing an entire revolution in the art of killing. So also was it when steam-power put the old coaches in the background, and electricity the semaphores that had reached a state of comparative perfection. Thus, the individual who from the past anticipates the future, might almost predict when a real discovery is next due, for that branch of science which has remained the longest without any great revolution and improvement, is the one in which a thorough change is to be anticipated.

It is not surprising that when firearms were first introduced, they were ridiculed and despised by the archers of the period. It seems really singular, when we consider the imperfections which then existed in the gunpowder used, in the barrel of the piece, and in the means of firing off the charge, that men ever used guns at all. Naturally enough, the generals then employed large guns or cannon, which, it seems, were adopted before smaller arms were in general use. In spite of the enormous advantages that would evidently result from any great improvement in cannon, it is strange that nearly the same style of weapon was used forty years ago by the British as was employed two hundred years previously; perhaps more accuracy had been reached in connection with the boring and sighting, but otherwise no great innovation upon the old system had been ventured on.

One of the most simple principles connected with an explosive compound and the shape of the gun had, during all this period of time, been neglected —this was, that the force of the gas generated acted inversely as the space in which it was confined; that is to say, if the gas were confined in a space of one hundred cubic inches, its force would be twice as great as though it were confined in a space of two hundred cubic inches. Now, the practical result of this fact would be, that when the powder was placed in the chamber of a gun, and was ignited, the gas would first act on the sides of the gun near the breech with much greater force than it would upon the middle or muzzle of the gun; and therefore it would be necessary, in order to resist this force, to make the back part of the gun much thicker than the middle, and likewise the middle much thicker than the muzzle; so that a gun of cast iron, properly constructed, ought to be nearly three times as thick at the breech as at the muzzle. This was a principle which the earlier constructors of cannon entirely ignored, and thus we see all except quite modern guns of a nearly uniform thickness of metal from breech to muzzle; thus indicating a great weakness at the breech, and an unnecessary weight at the muzzle—both serious defects in every point of view.

There have been several thorough inventions in connection with firearms since the first introduction of gunpowder. One or two very artful improvements were made in connection with the application of the slow match to the priming; but the introduction of flint and steel, and the spring-lock, was a decided epoch in the career of firearms. So great was the perfection attained in the construction of these locks, that in an able book published by a practical soldier within the last fifteen years, there is a recommendation that soldiers and sportsmen

should always use flint and steel in place of the percussion-cap, the former, it is asserted, giving the quickest and most certain results. To us, we confess, this advice seems like recommending an old stage-coach as quicker than an express train, and to be opposed at least to the results obtained from the present perfection of percussion-caps. The percussion-cap was certainly a marked advance upon the flint and steel; and as far as our means of exploding go, we are now probably at the end of invention in this particular, the mechanical arrangements enabling us, with the slightest labour, to discharge in an instant the fowling-piece or rifle in our hands. The other great steps that have been made to improve firearms are rifling the barrel, breech-loading, using expanding and elongated shot and shells, and employing revolvers.

It would occupy too much space were we to describe in detail the principles brought to bear in each one of these discoveries; it is sufficient to say that our small-arms now, instead of ranging efficiently to the distance of three hundred or four hundred yards, can be safely employed at twelve hundred or thirteen hundred yards; instead of a man being able occasionally to hit a target a foot square at one hundred yards with the old musket, he can, with the present rifle, make almost certain of doing this at two hundred yards; whilst a six-feet-square target at six hundred yards will be hit more frequently with the present weapon, than would one of the same dimensions placed at one-third the distance from an ordinary musket. A cannon-shot that could formerly be thrown two thousand yards, can now be sent five thousand; whilst one that formerly would penetrate six feet of earth, can now be made to pass through ten feet of the same material. Many other advantages are in like manner obtained, and thus the olden weapon would be no match for its modern rival.

But let us inquire, What are the great results obtained by all these improvements? for the main object in view, after all, is to kill and to destroy. If we compare the apparent destructive qualities of the present arms in use with those employed five or six hundred years ago, we might assume that our present battles were far more bloody than were those in the olden time. This assumption, however, is not borne out by facts, a result which may probably be accounted for in consequence of more caution and skill being employed to avoid the dangerous weapons brought into use in modern warfare; even the lamentable slaughter that is reported after some of the American battles, where the most modern weapons are used, is not so great as is said to have occurred when only bows and arrows were employed, for, speaking of Agincourt, we are informed after the battle of 'ten thousand French that on the field lie slain,' a butcher's bill quite sufficient to satisfy even a Yankee that there had been some tall fighting. It is also an undoubted fact, that when two barbarous tribes of Africa meet in the shock of war, the number of slain bear a larger proportion to the number engaged than is the case when trained soldiers encounter each other. To actually kill, seems a very difficult matter, and one to which much time, thought, and trouble have been given, for the more destructive our weapons become, the fewer are the victims of war. But what is more singular is, as shewn by statistics, that an

healthy season, a bad sewerage, indifferent ventilation, and a score of other easily-preventable evils, kill every ten years far more than are slain in war during the same period, in spite of the present perfection of our means of killing, and the frequency of fierce battles.

THE 'SASSION.'

If any English reader be puzzled by the title of this sketch, let him understand by it the great annual gathering of the Calvinistic Methodists, who are to all intents and practical purposes the established church of North Wales.

Monster-gatherings have peculiar charms for the 'Cymro'; indeed, his love for them is one of the most prominent traits of his enthusiastic nature, and any institution which would thrive by his patronage should take account of this. The firm hold which the Calvinistic priesthood have obtained over the minds of the Welsh, is in a great measure maintained by their annual Sassion. Among their flock it is the grand event of the year; indeed, so vastly important is it considered, that to hold it year by year at the same town would be deemed an injury to all other towns capable of affording the requisite accommodation. Consequently, the honour of its visits is equally divided among the three principal towns of Carnarvonshire; and Carnarvon, Bangor, and Pwllheli enjoy alternately the privilege of entertaining the assembled wisdom, piety, learning, and enthusiasm of the Calvinistic body.

As Carnarvon is the county town, stands more central, and is perhaps more accessible than its rivals, its Sassion is the largest and most important, and as such, from it we will make our sketch.

Let us imagine ourselves to be taking a walk on the Carnarvon and Pwllheli road, on the eve or early on the morning of the Sassion, in September. We shall find it crowded with pilgrims, chiefly agricultural, Pwllheli being the capital of a certain district called Lleyn, the population of which is perhaps the most primitive of the British Isles. Pedestrians of every shade are there, from the spruce young parson, who, in his fashionable narrow-brimmed hat, neat little wisp of a white cravat, long-skirted single-breasted frock, button-up vest, black peg-tops, and elastic boots, looks as veritable an ecclesiastical dandy as any young curate who ever encased his feet in fancy slippers, down to the rustic, the finery of whose home-spun suit culminates in the marvels of knitted work which adorn his calves. Vehicles, too, are there, from the rudely-built agricultural cart, drawn by a horse whose angular proportions might serve as a study for a Landseer or Rosa Bonheur, and jammed so full of the 'Cymru' that the wonder is that he draws it at all; to the imposing 'one-horse shay,' or open car, chartered for the express purpose of conveying half-a-dozen large-limbed, oily specimens of 'muscular Christianity,' in the shape of so many Calvinistic divines, being an importation for the gratification of the spiritual appetite of the frequenters of the great 'Holy Fair.' The odds are that five out of the six are either Williamses or Joneses; but scorning such common-place cognomens, each as an eminent man, and perhaps a bard, is distinguished by some such literary sobriquet as 'Jenn Glan Gwimbill,' 'Gwillym Machno,' 'Morganwydd Llechid,' or 'Hwfa Glan Gierionydd,'

and your ear may probably detect these euphonious names, uttered by some of their devotees who line the side-path, as each awful personage is recognised and pointed out; for great is the commotion and admiration which the transit of this 'great company of the preachers' excites among the pedestrians.

Turn we now to the Llanberis or Bethesda road, in time to meet the stream which issues from the great slate-quarries of Pennant and Asaphon Smith. Although the pastors are of the same type—the same budding and the same ripe divine being found all the world over—yet the flock are of a very different stamp, inasmuch as every quarryman is a dandy after a fashion of his own. He earns large wages, and fares frugally enough, but he delights in adorning his person; and for a great occasion like the Sassion, he gets himself up with a total recklessness of expense. Imagine, if you can, a kind of hybrid between the costumes of a Frenchman, a ploughman, and an English tar, and you will have an approximation to that of a Welsh quarryman. He wears the shiniest of hats, of the very latest shape; collar of the great sideboard pattern, bound up and supported by a cravat of bright-blue silk, edged with scarlet, tied in an enormous bow, with the ends stretched out across each shoulder in such a manner as to shew the red border to advantage; a shirt-front of fancy-coloured calico, with sham jewellery studs stuck in it; a coat of light tweed made in the loose-jacket style, the edges bound with black braid, and having a black velvet collar; waistcoat of figured silk, or perhaps white quilting bound with black, and set thick with fancy gilt buttons; and trousers of superfine black or dark-blue cloth, made very wide round the well-made and highly-polished Wellington boots which complete his attire.

The female portion may easily be described under the two classes ancient and modern; the former being such as are represented by the dolls bought by tourists for exorbitant prices at the shops of Welsh stationers and dealers in fancy goods; the latter, scarcely distinguishable from English farmers' daughters. The general physique of all differs little from that of an English agricultural population, save that the average stature would be found lower, and the general complexion perhaps more ruddy.

So much, then, for pastors and flock; let us now see what they are all doing at Carnarvon. It is yet early morn, and 'Capel Mawr'—the big chapel—has long since been full of preachers and deacons, there met in solemn conclave to draw up the programme for the day. This important preliminary over, and breakfast despatched, we observe a living stream of farmers, tradesmen, quarrymen, and labourers, nine-tenths of whom, to the no small astonishment of a stranger, while giving one arm to their wives or 'chariads,' with the other poise a chair on their shoulders. But joining the stream, and being carried along with it to a field on the outskirts of the town, the chair problem is at once solved, much to the credit of 'Taffy's' forethought; for when all are assembled—a company of from ten to twelve thousand people—nearly all will be found seated.

The most prominent object in the field, standing upon a little rising-ground, and commanding a good view of the whole, is a great temporary wooden structure, looking wonderfully like a

Punch-and-Judy show on a gigantic scale, the front of which is draped with black. This is the preachers' stage ; and if the reader can call to mind one of the large sheet-engravings containing a host of miniature portraits of Methodist divines, he has only to imagine the same heavily framed in black and viewed through a great magnifying-glass, to obtain a pretty accurate idea of the appearance which this stage presents when filled with its occupants. It is cram-full of such worthies as we saw carted to town along the Pwllhel road.

The wagons which conveyed many of the congregation are turned to good purpose as stands for their respective passengers. These, ranged round the outskirts of the crowd, give to the whole the appearance of a vast amphitheatre, the centre of which is occupied by the chair-carriers. Many of the chairs afford a seat to a couple of lovers, who, strange to say, seem to think it a glorious opportunity for indulging in a little quiet, though by no means bashful love-making.

But suddenly all is hushed ; the business of the day is about to commence : 'Hwfa Glan Gierionydd' is, to use a parliamentary phrase, 'on his legs.' With stentorian voice, he gives out the words of some well-known psalm or hymn, then the living mass suddenly becomes some three or four feet taller, and following the lead of one of the preachers, who acts as the Costa of the occasion, all burst forth with the loud voice of praise. Nor is their singing a mere disorganised roll of unisons ; but the treble is left to the women, and our smart quarrymen of Bethesda and Llanberis put in their parts, alto, tenor, and bass, with unerring precision. The effect is indescribable. The most fastidious critic could only say that it is much too slow, a fault which, after all, is perhaps a beauty, since it gives magnificence to the measure, and makes it 'deep, majestic, smooth, and strong.'

The hymn being over, one of the preachers makes an extempore prayer, after which the name of the first sermoniser is given out, and then all settle down to listen.

Slowly, very slowly rises the preacher, slowly he advances to the front of the stage, and slowly he gives out his text. Having done so much, he pauses disagreeably long, looks carefully about him, perhaps takes up a different position, with a view to give himself more room, for his oratory is to be enhanced by gesture and attitude. At last he seems settled to his mind, and now he begins. Very slowly and deliberately he speaks—every word seems to cost considerable effort of thought; nor does he speak loudly, although so very distinctly, that his every word may be heard in the most distant wagon-stand ; and if the object of all this almost painful deliberation is to gain attention, he has certainly succeeded, as is proved by the rigid stare and breathless silence of the whole vast concourse.

Gradually, however, he warms to his subject ; he begins to swing one arm to and fro with a peculiar pendulum-like motion, as though to beat time to his utterance, which is now more rapid and much louder. He begins, too, to use a strange monotonous intonation in a minor key, prolonging the last syllable of each sentence in a manner highly disagreeable to an English ear, but which has a wonderful effect upon a Welsh audience. A Welsh preacher is thought nothing of unless he is gifted with it. The preacher's arms are now going like

those of the little wooden soldiers which boys stick on the top of a pole to perform their sword-exercise by the power of the wind. All utterance is, to us, drowned in that strange monotone. Yet the people seem to understand him, while we wonderingly ask ourselves if that can possibly be the same man to whose deliberate delivery a few minutes ago it was so tedious to listen. Flakes of foam fly from his lips, his eyes grow bloodshot, his hair is all disordered, and ever and anon he pushes it back from his heated brow, down which streams of perspiration are pouring ; his very being seems carried away by his rushing eloquence, chanted forth in the same interminable monotone. The excitement of the audience seems hardly inferior to that of the preacher. Occasionally the stillness with which they listen is broken by a half-audible exclamation of admiration, but the ardent stare which the orator's placid opening provoked, is now riveted by his very frenzy. Suddenly the torrent of oratory is stopped, one might well think from sheer exhaustion ; but no, after a moment's recurrence to the deliberate style, he breaks forth again, like a lion refreshed ; and just as a second climax is reached, he sits down, when you might have supposed him to be good for the next half-hour at the least, amid murmurs of applause, testifying how eagerly every word of that strange wild eloquence has been drunk in by the vast audience.

They have, in fact, an insatiable greed for preaching, for they still listen with unabated attention to another and yet another sermon, similar in character to the first. A hymn is then sung, and the congress adjourned until the afternoon. The afternoon's proceedings are an exact counterpart of the morning's ; and by the time it is dusk, our religious holiday-makers will for the most part be on their homeward journey. Few will be found about the taverns after nightfall. The roads resound with fun and merriment, and in particular with chorus-singing, and so ends the Welsh 'Holy Fair.'

The real good effected by the Sission is, it is to be feared, but small ; the feeling excited by the field-oratory being very transient, and in most cases vanishing with the movement 'shoulder chairs,' yet it furnishes a day's outing to young Wales, without being attended with many of the evils usual to large mass-meetings.

THINGS REQUISITE.

HAVE a tear for the wretched—a smile for the glad ;
For the worthy, applause—an excuse for the bad ;
Some help for the needy—some pity for those
Who stray from the path where true happiness flows.

Have a laugh for the child in her play at thy feet ;
Have respect for the aged ; and pleasantly greet
The stranger that seeketh for shelter from thee—
Have a covering to spare, if he naked should be.

Have a hope in thy sorrow—a calm in thy joy ;
Have a work that is worthy thy life to employ ;
And, oh ! above all things on this side the sod,
Have peace with thy conscience, and peace with thy God.